

# Soil depth favorable to roots

The depth of the soil favoring root penetration is important in land use and management. For example, a shallow soil limits the amount of water and nutrients supplied to plants. This will, in turn, limit the kind of crop or vegetation for which the land is best suited.

Rooting depth is often limited by depth to bedrock, shale beds, water table, or other restrictive layers.

Depth favorable for plant root growth is determined by measuring the distance from the soil surface to the restrictive layer. Soils on flood plains, terraces, and fans are usually considered as deep soils because of a deep effective root-feeding zone. A layer of gravel and cobbles in the subsoil or underlying material is not considered as depth limiting, but it does affect the available water capacity of the soil.

